

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001 letter	To President Clinton from Thomas J. Vallely. Subject: Trip to Vietnam (3 pages)	11/06/2000	P5 4114
002. notes	re: Experts on Vietnam (14 pages)	n.d.	P5
003 memo	To President Clinton from Samuel Berger and Stephanie Streett. Subject: Themes for your trip Vietnam / Discussion of key issues (11 pages)	n.d.	P5 4115

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Speechwriting (Thomas Rosshirt)
OA/Box Number: 4020

FOLDER TITLE:

[Vietnam] [2]

Jamie Mettrailer
2008-0703-F
jm624

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

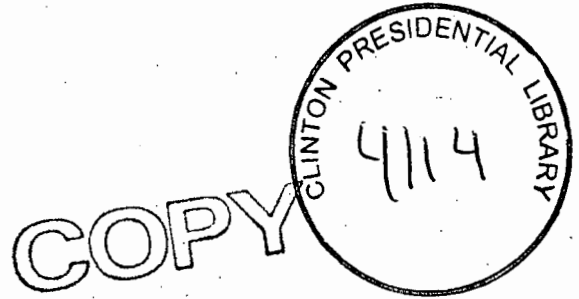
Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
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- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]



November 6, 2000

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500



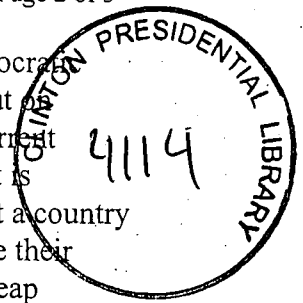
Dear Mr. President:

As requested by the National Security Council staff, I am sending along a few observations and suggestions that you might wish to consider in preparation for your upcoming trip to Vietnam. I have stressed those things which might suggest to you how your visit will be perceived by the Vietnamese, in the hope that this will enable you to navigate those somewhat tricky waters.

The defining, overarching, characteristic of the current Vietnamese leadership is fear. They are especially fearful of three things: First, and foremost, China; second, globalization; and third, democracy. Their fear of China is pervasive, and it is not without justification. To state the matter diplomatically, the Vietnamese are not overly fond of their traditional adversary with whom they have a new alliance, but they have no choice but to cooperate with them. China does not wish Vietnam to be too friendly toward the United States, and China is, moreover, a bully. It is not a coincidence that Jiang Zemin will reportedly be visiting Cambodia at the same time as you will be in Vietnam. China will be, as it were, very conspicuously and somewhat menacingly, waving to Vietnam during your visit. I think it would be very helpful if you were to acknowledge – discretely, of course – that you understood the nature of the Chinese president's visit to Phnom Penh. Suffice it to say that in such a situation it would be impolitic to suggest to the Vietnamese that they will need to choose between China and the United States; I am, of course, aware that you would have been very unlikely to do something so clumsy as this, but the issue is so sensitive – and the Vietnamese so fearful – that, hesitantly, I thought I would mention it.

The Vietnamese fear of globalization is not so well founded, but it is easy to understand. They have very little idea about how to position themselves in a global economy. They mastered the art of maneuvering within the old cold war scheme of things, where they played what cards they held as best they could. Within a globalized world they feel disoriented; though this fear is not by any means as pervasive as the fear of China. Still, they see it as threatening to end, rather than change, the leading role of the Party. It keeps them from allowing effective Internet access or reforming their banking system. The fear of democracy is likewise a fear of instability, not an ideological rejection. Furthermore, the principle proponents of democracy come from within the Communist Party, not from a dissident movement (as in China), or from adherents to the old regime. Stressing the matter would only make the job of these reformers more difficult. All in all, it is probably wisest to avoid any detailed discussion of Vietnam's domestic political situation, and no attempt should be made to distinguish between the government and the communist party.

At the same time as the Vietnamese are fearful of globalization (and the democratic reforms that would all but inevitably accompany it), they are also fearful of missing out on globalization. The Government of Vietnam asked us to prepare an analysis of their current economic situation, and their prospects for the future. A copy of the subsequent report is enclosed, and I won't bother summarizing it in detail. The thrust of it, however, is that a country chooses how fast it will grow through its policies; and in order to significantly improve their situation they will need to modernize their economy very quickly – that is, they must leap forward. (They are currently growing at 5-7% a year doing almost everything wrong; If they did more things right, their growth would be among the fastest in the world.) So, at the same time as they are afraid of leaping forward, they are also afraid of not leaping. Without rapid growth, they face rising social tensions and challenges to their legitimacy but the extent of this problem is not yet fully appreciated.



All of this stress on the pervasive fear among the Vietnamese leadership and the need to assuage it, might be taken to mean I am suggesting a "feel-good" approach to the trip. In fact the opposite is very nearly the case. It is important that you do not, in an effort to be obliging and polite, say things that are demonstrably untrue. Such as that Vietnam is an important nation, and that its future is a matter of grave concern and interest to the United States. It isn't and they know that. They have a very clearheaded awareness of their marginality in the contemporary world. They are immune to flattery, and overstating their own importance harms those attempting to impress the reality of the situation on the leadership.

In sum, the entire leadership of Vietnam, even those who are apprehensive about globalization and democracy, know that their country desperately needs to modernize. They are realists and pragmatists, not ideologues. That they concluded the recent Bilateral Trade Agreement, despite their anxiety about undue American influence, is an indication of how badly they wish to develop their economy. This trade agreement gives them access to markets that have long been closed to them; what they need now is the knowledge and expertise to exploit that access. However, skill alone will be insufficient. They still fear the political impact of a dynamic private sector, but only this growth will ease social tensions and allow them to seize the economic opportunities before them.

It is my understanding that you have endorsed the creation of the Vietnam Educational Foundation. Your address at the National University of Hanoi would be an ideal place to announce its formation, which had been originally proposed in Senate Bill 3142 by the six senators who are Vietnam veterans. The senators wanted to use education and exchange to strengthen bilateral ties and ease Vietnam's integration into the global economy. The foundation would primarily concentrate on rebuilding and strengthening science and technology. This activity, which was conceived of by Phillip Griffiths of the Institute of Advanced Study (IAS) and Jim Wolfensohn who continued to serve as the chairman of the board of the IAS while president of The World Bank, is something the Vietnamese badly want and need. It would also allow you to address the past in a positive light, as it would be funded by the payments the Vietnamese have made, and are making on the debts of the previous regime. That is, it is a direct legacy of the Vietnam War. It would of course be best if the necessary legislation were already passed by Congress at the time of your visit, but your assurances that the six senators will see to its passage would be sufficient.

Freedom leads to prosperity + cases

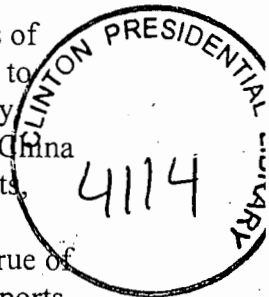
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it has support

their authority
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honored in the Congress

Science education and access to American universities are important components of China's present power. The Vietnamese want this education too, and they have the ability to exploit it. Having it will make them more independent of China, and this is something they want, though we need to encourage this thirst for independence discreetly, as I have said. China is Vietnam's competitor. That is, China's low-end exports, and Vietnam's high-end exports, compete in the same markets. The United States, on the other hand, is one of Vietnam's customers. The Vietnamese leadership is very aware of the difference. This is especially true of Saigon and its neighboring provinces, which generate the vast majority of the country's exports and 60% percent of the national budget. In Vietnam it is always helpful to remember that the Mayors of large cities, such as Saigon, are among the most powerful political figures in the nation. They should not be confused with American mayors, who have relatively little influence; the current Prime Minister of Vietnam, for instance, is the former Mayor of Ho Chi Minh City. You should make it a point to speak directly to the current mayor of the city.



The other sensitive issue to be addressed is human rights, religious tolerance in particular. The Vietnamese leadership is very aware of the role the Catholic Church played in Eastern Europe, and in the collapse of the Soviet Union, and they are reluctant to allow the church greater operating room. I would suggest that you tell the leadership that you will not raise this matter publicly on this first presidential visit. It is a complex issue, and needs to be addressed in a nuanced and private way. (You might wish to ask Bernard Cardinal Law, who is very knowledgeable about it, what he thinks of the current situation.) You might tell the leadership that human rights issues in general will need to be raised in the future, and that subsequent American presidents will need to address these matters forthrightly. Given the legacy of American involvement in Vietnam, I don't think it is appropriate to raise human rights issues -- publicly -- on the first visit of an American president, following a war in which two and a half million Vietnamese lost their lives. It could lead to the past being brought up in an acrimonious way. Frankly, there are some people in Vietnam that would welcome such a confrontation, and they are capable of contriving ways to bring it about. You will need to be careful of this. What happened to Senator John McCain last April -- when he was goaded into declaring that the wrong side won -- was not an accident, but a deliberately executed provocation. In my opinion -- and many people do not agree with me -- it was intended to demonstrate to China that they hadn't gone soft on America, after the very interesting and successful visit of Secretary of Defense William Cohen. As regards the past in general, frankly, unless you have genuinely strong feelings which with you are extremely comfortable, it might be best to leave it alone. The Vietnamese will not be disturbed by this. They understand that American opinion is still divided about the war in Vietnam, and it is not something they feel needs to be resolved before our two nations can develop a more cordial relationship.

I don't, of course, presume to know your own reasons for undertaking this trip. But, from the perspective of those of us who work with the Vietnamese, it is an opportunity to make them more confident of their own abilities to negotiate the future. I know this is a somewhat odd thing for an American president to undertake; but it is a good way to deal with the past.

Most respectfully,

Thomas J. Vally

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DRAFT



MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: SAMUEL BERGER
STEPHANIE STREETT

SUBJECT: Themes for Your Trip Vietnam/Discussion of key issues

I. PURPOSE

To discuss key themes and issues surrounding your trip to Vietnam and provide an outline of themes and schedule for APEC meeting in Brunei.

II. OVERVIEW OF TRIP TO VIETNAM

Your trip to Vietnam will be a catalyst for the nation to address the complicated experiences and strong emotion surrounding the Vietnam War. It will ignite controversy, introspection and retrospectives for the nation as well as a reexamination of your personal experience.

It is also a tremendous opportunity to:

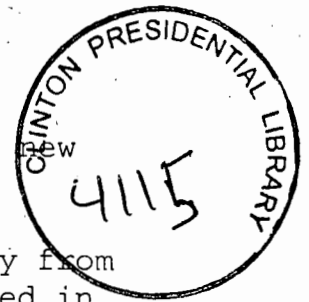
- take the nation forward;
- highlight our efforts to bring closure by accounting for missing Americans - and the support of the Vietnamese people and government for that effort;
- cap the step-by-step process of normalization made possible by progress on MIAs and lay out a vision for a fully normal relationship;
- help the American people see Vietnam not just as a war, but as a country - a country that is at once eager to benefit from participation on the global economy and from closer ties with America, but also fearful of change; and
- help the Vietnamese people see that America supports their economic development, while encouraging those willing to risk opening up their country to the world.

Our challenge is striking the right balance -- looking back at the war, emphasizing the top priority efforts to get a full accounting of POW/MIA, the step-by-step approach that

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

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we've taken to normalizing relations, and opening a new chapter in our relations.



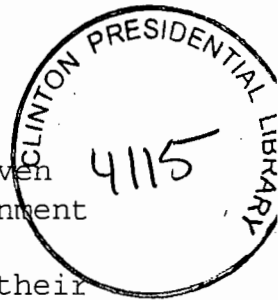
Reporters will be looking for any sign of an apology from you on behalf of the nation. They will be interested in what the trip means for you personally. Veterans will be watching very closely to see if we are putting business interests ahead of our concern for POW/MIAs or if we are using the trip as "a healing mission" or an effort to lock in your place in history. Human rights groups will be looking for attention to religious freedom and human rights issues.

There is intense media interest in the trip, and we propose a one-on-one interview with Terry Hunt, AP, prior to arriving in Vietnam to help frame the trip and release the steam that will be building for direct comment from you on what the visit means for the nation and for you personally.

III. CORE MESSAGES FOR THE VIETNAM TRIP

The core messages that we want to convey are:

- **Getting the fullest possible accounting of POW/MIAs has been and continues to be a central priority in our relations with Vietnam.** Since 1993, we've made tremendous progress on return of human remains, return of documents, field searches and investigation of MIA cases (are these the right items?). It is because we were able to make substantial progress on these issues that we moved forward, step-by-step, to normalize ties and open a new chapter for the future. POW-MIA issue are an important part of our agenda on the trip.
- **Normalization is a success that has produced tangible results.** We've done it the right way - in a way that remains true to veterans and the families of those who are missing and with the constant involvement and steady support of veterans groups, families and members of Congress. We now have stronger cooperation on POW-MIA, resettlement of refugees, enhanced cooperation in combating narcotics trafficking, expanded economic linkages and cooperation in a variety of fields.
- **This trip is the final step in normalization and our objectives are forward looking -- to advance our relations and encourage Vietnam's steps toward integration into the world economy, the best path toward political reform, improvements in human rights/religious freedom and protecting American**



security interests in the region. As in China, perhaps even more so, there is a clear tension in the Vietnamese government between those determined to preserve communist control by shutting out the world, and those who recognize that for their nation and economy to survive, they need to join the world. Closer ties with the United States and the U.S.-Vietnam trade agreement empower those within Vietnam who are pressing for deeper reform.

IV. DISCUSSION OF KEY ISSUES

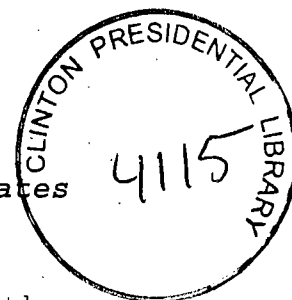
Outlined below are core talking points on the top issues and thoughts on how what you need to navigate through:

1. *What do you think of progress on POW/MIA issues? Is our work done?*

- Our first priority has and continues to be a complete accounting of POW/MIAs - it's an important part of our agenda. We've made real progress on this front but our work isn't done. There are still nearly 900 cases we're pursuing. We will use the trip to further our work in this area and will encourage efforts to provide more archival information about POW-MIA cases.
- (two or three of strongest factoids that show progress)
- The level of cooperation we have achieved on POW/MIA issues has permitted us to move forward step-by-step to normalize ties.
- We have worked to normalize relations with the steady support and engagement with families of the missing, veterans and of members of Congress who served in Vietnam.

Background

It is important to make clear that normalization followed from our progress on POW/MIAs and that the issue remains at the forefront of our agenda. There is still a tremendous amount of work to be done (halfway there?) and it would be devastating to create the impression that POW/MIA issues are behind us. While in Vietnam, you will visit an excavation site near Hanoi and participate in a remains repatriation ceremony to underscore the ongoing work and continuing commitment.



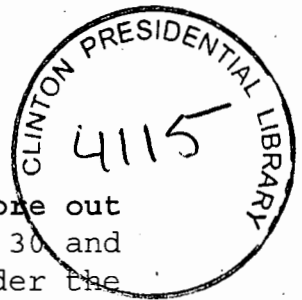
2. *What is the future of relations between the United States and Vietnam - what is the purpose of the trip?*

- This trip is the final step in normalizing relations with Vietnam and we are looking forward. I hope to:
 - ✓ advance progress on POW/MIA issues;
 - ✓ Move ahead with a fully normal relationship - expand cooperation in education, demining/unexploded ordinance, science and technology, disaster mitigation and relief, repatriation of deportees and HIV/AIDS and other health issues.
 - ✓ Advance Vietnam's integration into the world economy and enhance U.S. competitiveness in their market
 - ✓ Underscore our support for Vietnam's development and support reform - underscore concerns about human rights abuses, limits on religious freedom and protection of rights of workers.

Background

Your speech to students at Hanoi University on the first day in Vietnam is an important opportunity to outline your vision for the future.

Vietnam is making decisions that over the long term could bring about fundamental change. It decided to join ASEAN - which was established in part as a bulwark against communism and speaks the language of free markets, globalization and trade. They joined APEC in 1998 -- a step toward integration into the world economy and the global institutions which create its rules. We've also just concluded the Bilateral Trade Agreement that commits Vietnam to putting private sector investments and state-owned enterprises on a level playing field. As in China, hardliners in Vietnam opposed the agreement, fearing it will diminish the party's hold on the economy, and its people's lives, and spur the rise of a private sector beyond the regime's control. It will do all these things. Yet the Vietnamese leadership has chosen to take the risk, because the agreement is a prerequisite to WTO membership and to greater foreign investment. Even as we encourage greater respect for human rights and religious freedom, we want to encourage economic reform in Vietnam -- over the long term that's the best way to bring about internal change.



The older generation of Vietnamese leaders is more and more out of step with the people. 60% of the population is under 30 and has no direct memory of the war with America. 40% is under the age of 15. These young people do not look to the party as their future and party membership is down.

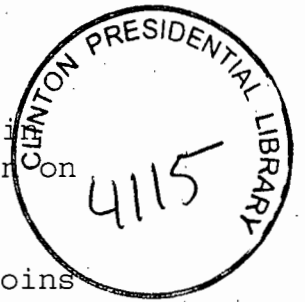
The conflict over the country's future direction is reflected geography - in the contrast between Hanoi, seat of government in North, and Ho Chi Minh City in the South. Ho Chi Minh City is a young, dynamic, bustling place where incomes are higher than the national average and cell phones, neckties, high-rise buildings, and foreign investors are everywhere. Half of the country's Internet users are there (though the total number is still tiny). Hanoi is more staid and sedate, the seat of government and center of education and culture.

3. Your record - did you make the right decision about military service during the Vietnam War? Do you have any regrets? How do you feel about finally going to Vietnam?

- People of good faith have different views on the war and decisions that were made. The war was a painful period in our history and Vietnam's.
- But this trip is not about me personally. It is about our interests as a country and the relationship between the United States and Vietnam.
- What I feel very good about is the way we have developed a new relationship with Vietnam - we have done it in a way that is true to our principles and values, honors those who served and does right by the families of those who are missing.
- The tremendous progress we've made over the last eight years has been built on the priority that we have placed on progress on POW-MIA issues. Progress done the right way - with a bipartisan consensus, with the support and advice from veterans, families of those missing and members of Congress who served in Vietnam.

Background - Key Dates

1993 - Establish requirement for "tangible progress" in four areas and authorize support for international lending



1994 - Lift economic embargo and establish Liaison office in Hanoi. Agreement on mechanism for trilateral investigation on Lao/Vietnam border cases.

1995 - First underwater recovery/investigation. Vietnam joins ASEAN; presents report on unilateral and joint investigative efforts. U.S. opens normal diplomatic relations.

1996 - Negotiations on BTA begin. Missing Persons Act is approved.

1997 - President certifies Vietnam is cooperating in good faith on established four criteria for POW/MIA. Exchange of ambassadors

1998 - Vietnam joined APEC and first waiver of Jackson Vanik granted extending U.S. export promotion and investment support programs for Vietnam. Important progress on POW/MIAs -- analysis of 16,500 artifacts and 28,000 archival items yield information that correlates to over 1,900 cases involving missing Americans. Identification is made on 26 missing personnel.

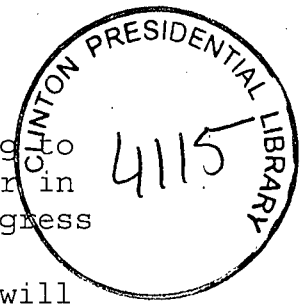
1999 - Agreement in principle on BTA. Remains study released.

2000 - Final agreement on BTA

4. Are you going to make an apology or propose reparations for the war?

- No.
- We have an obligation to honor those who fought and who suffered during the war, to do right by the missing and their families on both sides, to resettle refugees, and to cooperate with Vietnam on humanitarian projects like demining that enable people to live better lives today.
- That is what we have been doing, and that is what has enabled us to move forward.
- Re-opening old wounds and refighting old battles will not get us anywhere.

Background

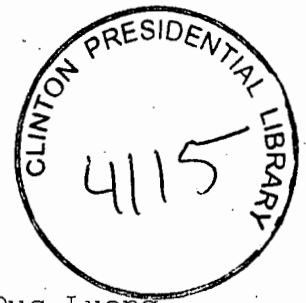


Veterans groups are waiting for any sign that you are going to apologize or discuss reparations. You need to be very clear in your rejection of this or you will unravel much of the progress we have made. Any mention of an apology will be seen as a betrayal by those who served. Any mention of reparations will be seized by the Vietnamese government and their demands will be endless. It will also set off a wave of anger and resentment by those in the United States who were exposed to Agent Orange while serving their country and who believe that their nation needs to take care of their needs first.

ATTACHMENTS

- Tab I Outline of schedule/key message events in Vietnam
- Tab II Outline of messages/themes/key message events for APEC

VIETNAM - KEY EVENTS

Friday, November 17, Hanoi

- ✓ Arrival Ceremony
- ✓ Photo Op. and Bilateral Meeting with President Tran Duc Luong
- ✓ Bilateral Meeting with Prime Minister Khai
- ✓ **Speech at Hanoi University**
- ✓ Embassy event
- ✓ State Dinner/Cultural performance

Speech to students at Hanoi University is scheduled for the first day to set a forward looking tone and focus. University setting underscores youth in Vietnam (60% of population is under 30) and recognition of the hunger for education in Vietnam (they have the largest Fulbright program in the world/\$4 million). Your speech can outline a vision for the future relationship between the United States and Vietnam, discuss expanded cooperation, encouraging reform, and underscore the potential and importance of Vietnam's opening and engagement with the world. You will have a few announcements, including HIV/AIDS funding and a Senator Kerry "debt for education proposal."

Saturday, November 18, Hanoi

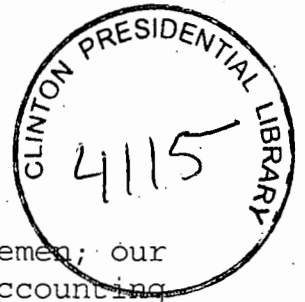
- ✓ **JTF-FA Excavation Site Visit**
- ✓ Cultural events
- ✓ Bilateral meeting with Party Secretary Le KHA Phieu
- ✓ **Demining event**
- ✓ Reception

Excavation Site Visit will underscore on-going efforts to get the fullest possible accounting for POW/MIAs and demonstrate that the work continues and is a priority in our relations with Vietnam. You will be joined the sons of the pilot whose remains are being searched for, veterans/families organizations and members of Congress.

Demining event will underscore expanded cooperation on demining/unexploded ordinance - equipment, humanitarian assistance through the Leahy Fund, NGOs. Vietnam has the world's largest unexploded ordinance problem. There will also be a children's art exhibit on landmines.

Sunday, November 19, Hanoi and Hue

- ✓ **Repatriation Ceremony**
- ✓ **Disaster Relief Event**
- ✓ Tour Citadel/Tu Doc Tomb



Repatriation Ceremony will underscore ongoing work and cooperation to find and identify remains of U.S. servicemen; our commitment to continue this work until we have a full accounting of all of our missing servicemen. There will be # caskets draped in flags. The ceremony will be short - a military chaplain will give a benediction, you will lay a wreath and pall bearers will take the caskets onto the plane to Hawaii for identification.

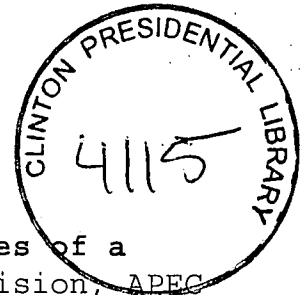
Disaster Relief. Flooding is a serious problem in Vietnam. Last year, we provided emergency assistance and we have ongoing cooperation to build flood resistant housing, early warning and weather forecasting assistance.

Monday, November 20, Ho Chi Minh City

- ✓ **Next generation leaders roundtable**
- ✓ **BTA/business event at Vietnam International Container Terminal**
- ✓ **Meet and greet consulate staff**

Next generation leaders roundtable will give you an opportunity to meet with young people (20s/30s) working in business, government, academia, media and arts - the closest chance you will have to reach out to civil society in a country where the state still permits little independent activity. These young people are impressive, articulate - the first generation in recent history not divided by conflict and regional differences.

At Vietnam International Container Terminal, you will underscore the potential of expanded trade, including the Bilateral Trade Agreement, the quickly evolving economy in the south and labor issues. The company that owns the terminal also owns the terminal you visited in Seattle in November 1999.

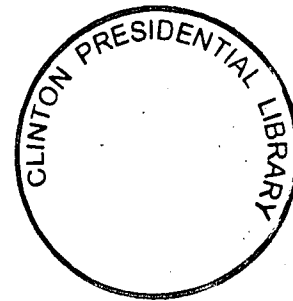
BRUNEI/APECCORE MESSAGES:

- Successful transformation of APEC to meet challenges of a globalized world. Because of your leadership and vision, APEC has become a leaders' forum that addresses regional economic and security issues (East Timor, Asian financial crisis, WTO) and has significantly strengthened U.S. alliances in Asia.
- In addition to traditional trade and economic issues, the APEC agenda has your strong imprint with a focus on bridging the global digital divide, combating infectious disease, promoting basic education and protecting the global environment. This is important because while economic integration advances both our interests and our values it also accentuates the need to alleviate economic disparity.
- At this meeting, we will be urging leaders to increase cooperation for a regional marketplace, accelerate restructuring/reform to expand economic growth; continue progress toward early launch of new round of WTO trade talks; put a stronger emphasis on quality of life issues (worker safety, child labor, environment, small business, safety nets, education, health).

Background

Since this is your last APEC meeting, we want to highlight more than just the deliverables and agenda for this year and show how APEC as an organization has been transformed to better address the needs of a global age. Eight years ago, the survival of our most important alliances around the world was in doubt. In Asia, it was far from certain that we would maintain our military presence, or that allies and friends there would continue to see its legitimacy. You recognized the need to transform APEC, just as you had the foresight to revitalize and transform U.S.-EU relationship. What we have done with APEC is an example of how we've adapted international organizations to solve economic and security problems and set international norms. The Sultan plans a special tribute to you for initiating the first Leaders' meeting at Blake Island and for your vision in helping to mold APEC into an effective economic cooperation organization.

KEY EVENTS AND MESSAGES



Wednesday, November 15, Brunei

- ✓ CEO Summit Speech
- ✓ Bilateral Meeting with President Putin
- ✓ Leaders' Group Photo
- ✓ Leaders' Agenda Briefing
- ✓ Bilateral Meeting with President Kim Dae Jung
- ✓ Photo with ABAC participants
- ✓ APEC dinner

CEO speech is the opportunity to take stock of the transformation of APEC and discuss the challenges that need to be tackled to meet ambitious APEC goals.

This will be your fourth meeting with President Putin since the Moscow Summit. While it's too early to tell if there will be any announcements out of the meeting, we will want to emphasize our continued discussion on nonproliferation, civil society, religious freedom, human rights and economic reform issues.

Meeting with Kim Dae Jung will be of great interest to the press, eager for news about whether you will go to North Korea and readout on discussions.

Thursday, November 16, Brunei

- ✓ Meet and Greet with Leaders/Group Photo
- ✓ Leaders' Retreat Sessions
- ✓ APEC Luncheon
- ✓ Meeting with Prime Minister Mori
- ✓ Reading of Declaration
- ✓ **Meeting with President Jiang**
- ✓ Courtesy call with the Sultan of Brunei

Meeting with President Jiang. The only hard news is the potential for an agreement on missiles. There will also be interest in your discussions about WTO implementation, North Korea, human rights/Tibet and Taiwan.